

Honors Level Course Portfolio Review Process

The State Board of Education has requested the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to develop and implement a review process in order to provide guidance to Local Education Agencies for effective implementation of honors level courses. The Honors Level Course Rubric and the Honors Implementation Guide will serve as a framework to guide teachers, principals and Local Education Agencies in developing and locally reviewing honors level courses. The honors level course review process will occur every three years.

Randomly selected Local Education Agencies will be notified at least one semester prior to the review in order for effective collection of documentation and artifacts. The review process is intended to provide comments, feedback and support to strengthen honors level courses for continuous program improvement.

Purpose of the North Carolina Honors Level Course Rubric

The purpose of this rubric is to clearly define what makes an honors level course different from a standard level course. The rubric assesses how the curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices are adapted for advanced learners. It is designed to provide a consistent framework to guide teachers and principals as they develop, implement and evaluate local courses aligned to the NC Standard Course of Study, which includes the Common Core State Standards and NC Essential Standards. Locally developed honors level courses are subject to the honors level course review process. The honors level rubric will serve as the foundation for the revision of the Honors Implementation Guide in the fall of 2012.

As honors level courses are prepared for review and specific evidence is required:

- ***Honors Level Course Portfolio Checklist*** to verify that each component is present and additional artifacts are identified.
- ***Honors Level Course Review Rubric*** which indicates whether each expectation is met or not met.

Reviewers and school personnel may use these forms to ensure that all the necessary components of an honors level course are met. The intent is to provide a consistent tool for school personnel and reviewers to evaluate honors level courses.

For local review, school personnel may consider the following:

- The curriculum guide is clear, concise and includes the following:
 - course description (including length of the course)
 - standards
 - concepts (generalizations/essential questions)
 - issues particular to the course expectations of performance
 - pacing guides with examples of assignments, time tables and deadlines assessments, rubrics, grading practices
 - instructional materials, equipment and/or technology
- The teacher is qualified and prepared to teach advanced learners through multiple instructional methods which may include modalities that incorporate Instructional Technology Essential Standards (ITES) and/or Career and Technical Education Industry Recognized Standards and Credentials.

North Carolina Honors Level Course Rubric

I. Curriculum Content

How is the honors level course adapted and differentiated for advanced learners?

There is evidence that the honors level course represents extension, acceleration and enrichment of the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study (Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and English/Language Arts and Literacy and North Carolina Essential Standards)* for the standard level course. Curriculum should indicate depth, rigor, accelerated pacing, complexity, challenges and creativity beyond the standard level course.*

How does the honors level curriculum support vertical alignment for college and career readiness?

There is evidence that extensions, acceleration and enrichment are aligned with the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* and/or other appropriate advanced courses of study.

Honors Level Course Portfolio Evidence:

- Teacher Rationale for Curriculum Content (intentional reflection & philosophy)
- Standards and Objectives
- Curriculum Plan (pacing guides, course syllabus, scope & sequence, curriculum maps, etc.)

☐ Met

☐ Not Met

Comment(s):

II. Instructional Materials and Methods

How is the honors level course taught?

- There is evidence of appropriate differentiation in instructional practices for advanced learners. Among instructional strategies that may help teachers manage differentiation and help students find a good learning “fit” include, but are not limited to:
 - Use of multiple texts and supplementary materials
 - Use of computer programs
 - Interest centers
 - Learning contracts
 - Compacting
 - Tiered sense-making activities and tiered products
 - Tasks and products designed with a multiple intelligence orientation
 - Independent learning contracts
 - Complex instruction
 - Group investigation
 - Product criteria negotiated jointly by student and teacher
 - Graduated task-and product-rubrics(Referenced from: “ED Differentiating Instruction for Advanced Learners in the Mixed Ability Classroom” <http://www.nagc.org/index.aspx?id=151>)
- There is evidence of instructional diversity of teaching strategies indicating complexity above the standard level course, which may include, but not be limited to:
 - Teacher as a facilitator, coach and model,
 - Student led learning and research,
 - Student exchange of ideas,
 - Project-based learning, problem-solving learning, and seminar style learning with a concentration of writing across all modalities
 - Integration of other content areas with connections to real-world skills and context, and
 - Use of higher level critical thinking skills and creativity for advanced learners.

Honors Level Course Portfolio Evidence:

- Teacher Rationale for Instructional Materials and Methods
- Instructional Materials and Methods (instructional resources, methods, strategies, equipment, and technology)
- Sample Units, Lesson(s), and Assignments
- Student Work Samples

☐ Met

☐ Not Met

Comment(s):

III. Assessment

How is the Honors Level Course Assessed?

- There is evidence that assessment practices align with the honors level curriculum and instructional best practices to include pre-assessment, formative and summative assessment.
- There is evidence of authentic assessments and ongoing student self- and peer- assessment to adjust and improve learning.

Honors Level Course Portfolio Evidence:

- Teacher Rationale for Assessment Practices
- Assessment Practices (grading practices, use of rubrics and/or scoring guides, use of formative and summative assessment)
- Assessment Samples (pre-assessment, description of formative assessment, and summative assessment)
- Student Work Assessment Samples

☐ Met

☐ Not Met

Comment(s):

North Carolina Honors Level Course Portfolio Review Checklist

This document serves as a checklist to assure that all of the criteria in the Honors Level Course Rubric have been addressed.

Course Title and LEA Name and Number

Course Description

Documentation of Local Approval with signature from LEA representative(s)

Curriculum Content Portfolio Evidence

- Teacher Rationale for Curriculum Content
- Standards and Objectives
- Curriculum Plan

Instructional Materials and Methods Portfolio Evidence

- Teacher Rationale for Instructional Materials and Methods
- Instructional Materials and Methods (instructional resources, methods, strategies, equipment, and technology)
- Sample Units, Lesson(s), and Assignments
- Student Work Samples

Assessment Portfolio Evidence

- Teacher Rationale for Assessment Practices
- Assessment Practices (grading practices, use of rubrics and/or scoring guides, use of formative and summative assessment)
- Assessment Samples (pre-assessment, description of formative assessment, and summative assessment)
- Student Work Assessment Samples

Other
